Without thee, what a dim and woful story
Our years would be, oh, excellence sublime!
Slip of the life eternal, brightly growing
In the low soil of time!

Miss Cary is now in the enjoyment of a well earned, well-merited fame. Of a singularly modest deportment, she is entirely free from the vanities and assumption which so generally characterize our literary people. All who come within the circle of her acquaintance become fondly attached to her as a woman. Never by word or action will the visitor at her cheerful home be made to feel that he is in the presence of one of the "queens of song" of his country. She bears with her, at all times, that demeanor and presence which can only proceed from one truly pure, truly good, truly loving. May she live long to adorn the literary society of the metropolis, and to add dignity and excellence to our literature!

PHOTOGRAPHY.

First Paper.

IT appears that three leading nations—the French, the English and the Germans—all share in the merit of having first suggested, then applied, and finally developed the existence of the photographic element. It may not be superfluous to all our readers to state, that the whole art in all its varieties rests upon the facts of the blackening effects of light upon certain substances, and chiefly upon silver, on which it acts with a decomposing power. The silver being dissolved in a strong acid, surfaces steeped in the solution became encrusted with minute particles of the metal, which in this state darkened with increased rapidity. These facts were first ascertained and recorded, as regards chloride of silver, or silver combined with chlorine, in 1777, by Scheele, a native of Pomerania, and in 1801, in connection with nitrate of silver, by Ritter, of Jena. Here, therefore, were the raw materials for the unknown art; the next step was to employ them. And now we are at once met by that illustrious name to which we have alluded. Sir Humphrey Davy was the first to make the practical application of these materials, and to foresee their uses. In conjunction with Mr. Thomas Wedgwood, only less eminent than his brother Josiah, Sir Humphrey succeeded, by means of a camera obscura, in obtaining images upon paper, or white leather prepared with nitrate of silver—of which proceeding he has left the most interesting record in the Journal of the Royal Society, for June, 1802.* Their aim, as the title shows, was not ambitious; but the importance lay in the first stain traced upon the prepared substance, not in the thing it portrayed. In one sense, however, it was very aspiring, if colors as well as form were sought to be transferred, as would appear from the attempt to copy colored glass; otherwise it is difficult to account for their selecting this particular material.

Besides showing the possibility of imprinting the forms of objects thus reflected in the camera, the paper in question proceeds to describe the process since known as "Photographic Drawing," by which leaves, or lace, or the wings of insects, or any flat and semi-transparent substances, laid upon prepared paper, and exposed to the direct action of the sun, will leave the perfect tracery of their forms. But having thus conjured up the ethereal spirit of photography, they failed in all attempts to retain it in their keeping. The charm, once set a going, refused to stop—the slightest exposure to light, even for the necessary purposes of inspection, continued the action, and the image was lost to view in the darkening of the whole paper. In short, they wanted the next secret, that of rendering permanent, or, in photographic language, of *fixing* the image. Here, therefore, the experiment was left to be taken up by others, though not without a memento of the prophetic light cast on the mind's eye of the great elucidator; for Sir Humphrey observes: "Nothing but a method of preventing the unshaded parts of the delineation from being colored by the exposure to the day is wanted to render this process as useful as it is elegant."

Meanwhile, in 1803, some remarkable experiments were made by Dr. Wollaston, proving the action of light upon a resinous substance known in commerce as "gum guiacum;" and in due time another workman entered the field, who availed himself of this class of materials. The name of Joseph Nicephore de Niepce is little known to the world as one of the founders of the new popular art, his contributions being exactly of that laborious and rudimental nature which later inventions serve to conceal. He was a French gentleman of private fortune, who lived at Chalons-sur-Saone, and pursued chemistry for his pleasure. Except also in the sense of time, he cannot be called a successor to Davy and Wedgwood; for it is probable that the path they had traced was unknown to him. Like them, however, he made use of the camera to cast his images; but the substance on which he received them was a polished plate of pewter, coated with a thin bituminous surface. His process is now rather one of the curiosities of photographic history; but, such as it was, it gained the one important step of rendering his creations permanent. The labors of the sun in his hands remained spell-bound, and remain so still. He began his researches in 1814, and was ten years before he attained this end. To M. Niepce also belongs the credit of having at once educed the high philosophic principle, since then universally adopted in photographic practice, which put faith before sight—the conviction of what must be before the appearance of what is. His pictures, on issuing from the camera, were invisible to the eye, and only disengaged by the application of a solvent which removed those shaded parts unhardened by the action of the light. Nor do they present the usual reversal of the position of light and shade, known in photographic language as a *negative* appearance; but, whether taken from nature or from an engraving, are identical in effect, or what is called *positives*. But, though considering all these advantages, the art of heliography, as it was called by its author, was at that early period as great a wonder as any that have followed it, yet it was deficient in those qualities which recommend a discovery to an impatient world. The process was difficult, capricious, and tedious. It does not appear that M. Niepce ever obtained an image from nature in less than between seven to twelve hours, so that the change in lights and shadows necessarily rendered it imperfect; and in a specimen we have seen, the sun is shining on opposite walls. Deterred, probably, by this difficulty, from any aspirations after natural scenes, M. Niepce devoted his discovery chiefly to the copying of engravings. To this he sought to give a practical use by converting

* "An account of a method of copying paintings upon glass and of making *profiles* by the agency of light upon nitrate of silver, with observations, by Humphrey Davy."

his plate, by means of the application of an acid, into a surface capable of being printed by the ordinary methods. Here again he was successful, as specimens of printed impressions still show, though under circumstances too uncertain and laborious to encourage their adoption. Thus the comparative obscurity in which his merits have remained, is not difficult to comprehend; for while he conquered many of the greater difficulties of the art, he left too many lesser ones for the world to follow in his steps. To these reasons may be partially attributed the little sensation which the efforts of this truly modest and ingenious gentleman created in England, which country he visited in 1827, for the purpose, he states, of exhibiting his results to the Royal Society, and of rendering homage of his discovery to His Britannic Majesty. A short memorial, drawn up by himself, was therefore forwarded, with specimens, to the hands of George IV.; but a rule on the part of the Royal Society, to give no attention to a discovery which involves a secret, proved a barrier to the introduction of M. Niepce's results to that body. Dr. Wollaston was the only person of scientific eminence to whom they appear to have been exhibited; and, considering their intrinsic interest, as well as the fact of his being, in some sort, their progenitor, it is difficult to account for the little attention he appears to have paid them. M. Niepce therefore returned to his own country, profoundly convinced of the English inaptitude for photographic knowledge.

In the meantime the indiscretion of an optician revealed to the philosopher of Chalons the fact that M. Daguerre, a dioramic artist by profession, was pursuing researches analogous to his own in Paris. This led to an acquaintance between the two, and finally a legal partnership in the present pains and possible profits of the new art. M. Niepce died in 1833 without, it seems, contributing any further improvement to the now common stock; and M. Daguerre, continuing his labors, introduced certain alterations which finally led to a complete change in the process. Suffice it to say, that discarding the use of the bituminous varnish, and substituting a highly polished tablet of silver, he now first availed himself of that great agent of photographic science, the action of iodine, by means of which the sensitiveness of his plate was so increased as to render the image an affair of fewer minutes than it had previously been of hours. At the same time the picture, still invisible, was brought to light by the application of the fumes of mercury, after which a strong solution of common salt removed those portions of the surface which would otherwise have continued to darken, and thus rendered the impression permanent.

Here, therefore, was a representation obtained in a few minues by a definite and certain process, which was exquisitely minute and clear in detail, capable of copying nature in all her stationary forms, and also true to the natural conditions of light and shade. For the fumes of mercury formed minute molecules of a white color upon those parts of the iodised tablet darkened by the light, thus producing the lights to which the silver ground supplied the shades.

In 1839, the result of M. Daguerre's long years of labor, called after himself the Daguerreotype, came forth fully furnished for use; and in the June of that year gave rise to a remarkable scene in the French Chambers. The question before the deputies was this: MM. Daguerre and Niepce, jun., (for the partnership gave all the advantages of M. Daguerre's discovery to the son of his late colleague), were possessed of a secret of the utmost utility, interest and novelty to the civilized world—a secret for which immense sacrifices of time, labor, and money had been made, but which, if restricted by patent for their protection, would be comparatively lost to society. A commission had therefore been appointed by the French Government to inquire into its merits, and the secret itself entrusted to M. Arago, who succeeded at once in executing a beautiful specimen of the art. Thus practically convinced, he addressed the Chamber in a speech, which is a masterpiece of scientific summary and philosophic conclusion. He pointed out the immense advantages which might have been derived, "for example, during the expedition to Egypt, by a means of reproduction so exact and so rapid." He observed that "to copy the millions of hieroglyphics which entirely cover the great monuments at Thebes, Memphis and Carnac, &c., would require scores of years and legions of artists; whereas with the Daguerreotype a single man would suffice to bring this vast labor to a happy conclusion." He quoted the celebrated painter De la Roche in testimony of "the advantage to art, by designs as perfect as possible, and yet broad and energetic—where a finish of inconceivable minuteness in no respect disturbs the repose of the masses, nor impairs in any manner the general effect." The scene was French in the highest sense—at once scientific, patriotic and withal dramatic—France herself treating for the creations of genius on the one hand, and on the other dispensing them "a gift to the whole world." It was repeated in the Chamber of Peers, who, in addition to other arguments addressed to them by M. Gay-Lussac, were reminded, with a true French touch, that "even a field of battle in all its phases may be thus delineated with a precision unattainable by any other means!" The result was that a pension of 10,000 francs was awarded for the discovery—6,000 to M. Daguerre, 4,000 to M. Niepce. The seals which retained the secret were broken, the Daguerreotype became the property of the world.

It may be added that all that has been since done for the Daguerreotype are improvements in the same direction. It has that mark of a great invention—not to require or admit of any essential deviation from its process. Those who have contributed to perfect it are also of the same race as the inventor. The names of M. Fizeau and M. Claudet are associated with its present state. The first, by using a solution of chloride of gold, has preserved the daguerreotype from abrasion, and given it a higher tone and finish; while M. Claudet, who has variously contributed to the advance of the art, by the application of chloride of bromine with iodine, has accelerated a hundred-fold the action of the plate; at the same time, by a prolongation of a part of the process, he has, without the aid of mercury, at once converted the image into a positive, the silver ground now giving the lights instead of, as before, the shades of the picture.

We may now turn to England. and to those discoveries which, though less brilliant in immediate result, yet may be said to have led to those practical uses which now characterize the new agent. The undivided honor of having first successfully worked out the secret of photography in England belongs to Mr. Fox Talbot. He also is a private gentleman, living in the country, and pursuing chemical researches for his own pleasure. In his case it may be strictly said that he took up the ground to which Davy and Wedgwood had made their way. Paper was

the medium he adhered to from the beginning, and on which he finally gained the victory. We have no account of the repeated essays and disappointments by which this gentleman advanced step by step to the end in view. All we know is that the French success on metal and the English success on paper were, strange to say, perfectly coincident in date. Daguerre's discovery was made known in Paris in January, 1839; and in the same month Mr. Fox Talbot sent a paper to the Royal Society, giving an account of a method by which he obtained pictures on paper, rendered them unalterable by light, and by a second and simple process, which admitted of repetition to any extent, restored the light and shadows to their right conditions.

This announcement fell, like the pictures of light themselves, upon ground highly excited in every way to receive and carry it forward. It was immediately taken up by Sir John Herschel, who commenced a series of experiments of the most practical importance to photography and science in general, one of the first results of which was the discovery of the hyposulphate of soda as the best agent for dissolving the superfluous salts, or, in other words, of fixing the picture. This was one of those steps which has met with general adoption.

Another immediate impulse was given by a lecture read at the London Institution in April, 1839, and communicated by the Rev. J. B. Reade, recommending the use of gallic acid in addition to iodine or chloride of silver as a means of greatly increasing the sensitiveness of the preparation. Again, Mr. Robert Hunt, since known as the author of a good work on this subject, published at the British Association at Plymouth, in 1841, another sensitive process, in which the ferrocyanate of potash was employed; and in 1844 the important use of the protosulphate of iron in bringing out, or, as it is termed, *developing* the latent picture. Other fellow-laborers might be mentioned, too, all zealous to offer some suggestions of practical use to the new-born art.

Meanwhile Mr. Fox Talbot, continuing to improve on his original discovery, thought fit in 1842 to make it the subject for a patent, under the name of the calotype process. Mr. Fox Talbot's directions, though sufficient for his own preinstructed hand, were too vague for the tyro; and an enlistment into the ranks of the "Pilgrims of the Sun" seldom led to any result but that of disappointment. Thus, with impediments of this serious nature, photography made but slow way in England; and the first knowledge to many even of her existence came back to us from across the Border. It was in Edinburgh where the first earnest, professional practice of the art began, and the calotypes of Messrs. Hill and Adamson remain to this day the most picturesque specimens of the new discovery.

It was at this crisis that a paper published in the "Philosophical Transactions," of May, 1844, by Mr. George Cundell, gave in great measure the fresh stimulus that was needed. The world was full of the praise of the daguerreotype, but Mr. Cundell stood forth as the advocate of the calotype or paper process, pointing out its greater simplicity and less expensiveness of apparatus, its infinite superiority in the power of multiplying its productions, and then proceeded to give those careful directions for the practice, which, though containing no absolutely new element, yet suggested many a minute correction where every minutia is important. With the increasing band of experimentalists who arose—for all photographers are such—now ensued the demand for some material on which to receive their pictures, less expensive than the silver plate, and less capricious than paper. However convenient as a medium, this latter, from the miscellaneous nature of its antecedents, was the prolific parent of disappointment. Numerous expedients were resorted to to render it more available, it was rubbed, polished and waxed, but, nevertheless, blotches and discolorations would perpetually appear, and that at the very moment of success, which sorely tried the photographic heart. The Journal of the Society sends up at this time one vast cry of distress on this subject, one member calling unto another for help against the common enemy. Under these circumstances many a longing eye was fixed upon glass as a substitute; and numerous experiments, among which those by Sir John Herschel were the earliest and most successful, were tried to render this material available. But glass itself was found to be an intractable material; it has no powers of absorption, and scarcely any affinities. The one thing evidently needed was to attach some transparent neutral coating of extreme tenuity to its surface, and in due time the name of Niepce again appears, supplying the intermediate step between failure and success. M. Niepce de St. Victor, nephew to the inventor of heliography, is known as the author of the albumen process, which transparent and adhesive substance being applied to glass and excited with the same chemical agents as in the calotype process, is found to produce pictures of great beauty and finish. But, ingenious as is the process, and often as it is still used, it fails of that unsurpassable fitness which alone commands universal adoption.

The amalgamation of the substances is tedious and complicated, and the action of the light much slower. The albumen process was a great step, and moreover a step in the right direction; for it pointed onward to that discovery which has reduced the difficulties to the lowest sum, and raised its powers, in one respect at all events, to the highest possibility, viz. to the use of collodion. The Daguerre to this Niepce was an Englishman—Mr. Scott Archer—who is entitled to fame not only for this marvelous improvement, but for the generosity with which he threw it open to the public. The character of the agent, too, adds interest to the invention. The birth and parentage of collodion are both among the recent wonders of the age. Gun-cotton, partly a French and partly a German discovery, is but a child in the annals of chemical science; and collodion, which is a solution of this compound in ether and alchohol, is its offspring. Its first great use was, as is well known, in the service of surgery; its second in that of photography. Not only did the adoption of this vehicle at once realize the desires of the most ardent photographer—not only, thus applied, did it provide a film of perfect transparency, tenuity, and intense adhesiveness—not only was it found easy of manipulation, portable and preservable—but it supplied that element of rapidity which more than anything else has given the miraculous character to the art. Under the magician who first attempted to enlist the powers of light in his service the sun seems at best to have been but a sluggard; under the sorcery of Niepce he became a drudge in a twelve hours factory. On the prepared plate of Daguerre and on the sensitive paper of Fox Talbot the great luminary concentrates his gaze for a few earnest minutes; with the albumen-sheathed glass he takes his time more leisurely still; but at the delicate film of collodion—which hangs before him finer

than any fairy's robe, and potent only with invisible spells—he literally does no more than wink his eye, tracing in that moment, with a detail and precision beyond all human power, the glory of the heavens, the wonders of the deep, the fall, not of the avalanche, but of the apple, the most fleeting smile of the babe, and the most vehement action of the man.

Further than this the powers of photography can never go; they are already more nimble than we need. Light is made to portray with a celerity only second to that with which it travels; it has been difficult to contrive the machinery of the camera to keep pace with it, and collodion has to be weakened in order to clog its wheels.

While these practical results occupied the world, more fundamental researches had been carried on. By the indefatigable exertions of Sir John Herschel and Mr. Hunt, the whole scale of mineral and other simple substances was tested in conjunction with tried and untried chemical processes, showing how largely nature abounds with materials for photographic action. Preparations of gold, platinum, mercury, iron, copper, tin, nickel, manganese, lead, potash, &c., were found more or less sensitive, and capable of producing pictures of beauty and distinctive character. The juices of beautiful flowers were also put into requisition, and papers prepared with the colors of the corchorus japonica, the common ten weeks stock, the marigold, the wallflower, the poppy, the rose, senecio splendens, &c., have been made to receive delicate, though, in most cases, fugitive images. By these experiments, though tending little to purposes of utility, the wide relations and sympathies of the new art have been in some measure ascertained, and its dignity, in the harmonious scale of natural phenomena, proportionably raised.

The invention now becoming familiar to the public by the name of photo-galvanic engraving is a most interesting instance of the reciprocity of action. That which was the chief aim of Niepce in the humblest dawn of the art, viz., to transform the photographic plate into a surface capable of being printed, which had been *bona fide* realized by Mr. Fox Talbot, M. Niepce de St. Victor, and others, but by methods too complicated for practical use, is now, by the co-operation of electricity with photography, done with the simplicity and perfection which fulfill all conditions. This invention is the work of Mr. Pretch of Vienna, and deserves a few explanatory words. It differs from all other attempts for the same purpose in not operating upon the photographic tablet itself, and by discarding the usual means of varnishes and bitings in. The process is simply this:

A glass tablet is coated with a gelatine diluted till it forms a jelly, and containing bi-chromate of potash, nitrate of silver, and iodide of potassium. Upon this, when dry, is placed, face downwards, a paper positive, through which the light, being allowed to fall, leaves upon the gelatine a representation of the print. It is then soaked in water, and while the parts acted upon by the light are comparatively unaffected by the fluid, the remainder of the jelly swells, and rising above the general surface gives a picture in relief, resembling an ordinary engraving on wood. On this intaglio a cast is now taken in gutta percha, to which the electro process in copper being applied, a plate or matrix is produced, bearing on it an exact repetition of the original positive picture. All that now remains to be done, is to repeat the electro process, and the result is a copper plate, in the necessary relievo, of which, as the company who have undertaken to utilize the invention triumphantly set forth, nature furnishes the materials, and science the artist, the inferior workman being only needed to roll it through the press.

And here, for the present, terminate the more important steps of photographic development, each in its turn a wonder, and each in its turn obtained and supported by wonders only a little older than itself. It was not until 1817 that the chemical substance called iodine, on which the foundations of all popular photography rest, was discovered at all; bromine, the only other substance equally sensitive, not till 1826. The invention of the electro process was about simultaneous with that of photography itself. Gutta-percha only just preceded the substance of which collodion is made; the ether and chloroform, which are used in some methods, that of collodion. We say nothing of the optical improvements purposely contrived or adapted for the service of the photograph—the achromatic lenses, which correct the discrepancy between the visual and chemical foci; the double lenses, which increase the force of the action; the binocular lenses, which do the work of the stereoscope; nor of the innumerable other mechanical aids which have sprung up for its use; all things, great and small, working together to produce what seemed at first as delightful but as fabulous as Aladdin's ring, which is now as little suggestive of surprise as our daily bread.

At present no observation or experience has sufficed to determine the state of atmosphere in which the photographic spirits are most propitious; no rule or order seems to guide their proceedings. You go out on a beautiful clear day, not a breath stirring, chemicals in order, and lights and shadows in perfection; but something in the air is absent, or present, or indolent, or restless, and you return in the evening only to develop a set of blanks. The next day is cloudy and breezy, your chemicals are neglected, yourself disheartened, hope is gone, and with it the needful care; but here again something in the air is favorable, and in the silence and darkness of your chamber pictures are summoned from the vasty deep which at once obliterate all thought of failure. Happy the photographer who knows what is his enemy, or what is his friend; but in either case it is too often "something," he can't tell what; and all the certainty that the best of experience attains is, that you are dealing with one of those subtle agencies which, though Ariel-like it will serve you bravely, will never be taught implicitly to obey.

As respects the time of the day, however, one law seems to be thoroughly established. It has been observed by Daguerre and subsequent photographers that the sun is far more active, in a photographic sense, for the two hours before, than for the two hours after it has passed the meridian. As a general rule, too, however numerous the exceptions, the cloudy day is better than the sunny one. Contrary, indeed, to all preconceived ideas, experience proves that the brighter the sky that shines above the camera the more tardy the action within it. Italy and Malta do their work slower than in Paris. Under the brilliant light of a Mexican sun, half an hour is required to produce effects which in England would occupy but a minute. In the burning atmosphere of India, though photographical the year round, the process is comparatively slow and difficult to manage; while in the clear, beautiful, and, moreover, cool light of the higher Alps of Europe, it has been proved

that the production of a picture requires many more minutes, even with the most sensitive preparations, than in the murky atmosphere of London.

But these are at most but superficial influences: deeper causes than any relative dryness or damp are concerned in these phenomena. The investigation of the solar attributes, by the aid of photographic machinery, for which we are chiefly indebted to the researches of Mr. Hunt and M. Claudet, are, scientifically speaking, the most interesting results of the discovery. By these means it is proved that besides the functions of light and heat the solar ray has a third, and what may be called photographic function, the cause of all the disturbances, decompositions, and chemical changes which affect vegetable, animal, and organic life. It had long been known that this power, whatever it may be termed — energia — actinism—resided more strongly, or was perhaps less obstructed, in some of the colored rays of the spectrum than in others, that solutions of silver and other sensitive surfaces were sooner darkened in the violet and the blue than in the yellow and red portions of the prismatic spectrum.

Mr. Hunt's experiments further prove that mere light, or the luminous ray, is little needed where the photographic or "chemical ray" is active; and that sensitive paper, placed beneath the comparative darkness of a glass containing a dense purple fluid, or under that deep blue glass commonly used as a finger-glass, is photographically affected almost as soon as if not shaded from the light at all. Whereas, if the same experiment be tried under a yellow glass or fluid, the sensitive paper, though robbed neither of light nor heat, will remain a considerable time without undergoing any change.*

And this brings us to the artistic part of our subject, and to those questions which sometimes puzzle the spectator, as to how far photography is really a picturesque agent, what are the causes of its successes and failures? And those questions may be fairly asked now, when the scientific processes on which the practice depends are brought to such perfection that, short of the coveted attainment of color, no great improvement can be further expected. If we look round a photographic exhibition we are met by results which are indeed honorable to the perseverance, knowledge, and in some cases to the taste of man. The small, broadly-treated, Rembrandt-like studies, representing the sturdy physiognomies of Free-Church ministers and their adherents, which first cast the glamor of photography upon us, are replaced by portraits of the most elaborate detail, and of every size, not excepting that of life itself.

The little bit of landscape effect, all blurred and uncertain in forms, and those lost in a confused and discolored ground, which was nothing and might be anything, is superseded by large pictures with minute foregrounds, regular planes of distance, and perfectly clear skies. The small attempts at architecture have swelled into monumental representations of a magnitude, truth, and beauty, which no art can surpass — animals, flowers, pictures, engravings, all come within the grasp of the photographer; and last, and finest and most interesting of all, the sky with its shifting clouds, and the sea with its heaving waves, are overtaken in their course by a power more rapid than themselves.

* We may add, though foreign to our subject, that the same experiment applied by Mr. Hunt to plants has been attended with analogous results. Bulbs of tulips and ranunculuses have germinated beneath yellow and red glasses, but the plant has been weakly and has perished without forming buds. Under a green glass (blue being a component part of the color) the plants have been less feeble, and have advanced as far as flowering buds; while beneath the blue medium perfectly healthy plants have grown up, developing their buds, and flowering in perfection.

☞ What an infinite variety there is in the world of mind as well as matter! No two faces in all the uncounted thousands of the earth are alike; so neither are there any two minds but have their distinctive features and expressions. When will there come any poet who will complete the "Christabel" of Coleridge in the same spirit in which it was begun? A poet of equal genius may arise, and may add to it a conclusion of superior beauty; but it will be like half a peach rounded with an apricot, or a broken rose mended with lily leaves. And if any one should be so successful as to enter into the heart and mystery of that beautiful half-told tale, (which would well have borne to be a twice-told tale,) and unfold it in the very spirit of its beginner, he would not then get the credit from the world of being anything but a nice and subtle imitator. The world loves originality above all things—

"Still sighs the world for something new,
For something new;"

and it pays but the lower meed of praise to the man who follows in the van of another, even though he excels his predecessor. "Unity in variety, and variety in unity," make up the universe, says the philosopher; and here is a subject for endless study alone in the variety which marks the unity of the human race. But inanimate nature has also its tireless and wonderful charm; no two violets that you pluck from the grass are alike; sisters they are, but each has its individuality.

Speaking of Coleridge, how can we ever forgive or excuse that unhappy blunderer, "that person on business, from Porlack," who, unwitting what he did, and unknowing how future generations would rise up and express their dissatisfaction against him, dragged the poet away from his exquisite vision of Kubla Khan, and entailed upon us irremediable loss? How sordid and contemptible would that business transaction, whatever it was, appear, in contrast with that gorgeous dream, doomed to pass, forgotten and untold, to the shadowy realms of nothingness, could the vision be recalled and placed by its side!

Poe said that there was nothing more wildly poetical in the whole range of all literature, than that passage in Horne's "Orion," where the hunter is represented by the "*shadow* of a stag," learning to drink from morn till night. But has it not its prototype in that introduction of the palace to us, in Kubla Khan?—in which the palace is not first described, but we are permitted to see—

"The shadow of the dome of palaces,
Floated midway on the waves."

What a cool, delicious sense of the gliding waters we gain, and what an airy, unsubstantial image of the "miracle of rare device," whose shadow we behold floating upon the waves, before the eyes of our fancy reach the shore!

It is in effects like these that we have the triumph of poetic art; and yet it is not art, but the inspiration of genius, and the poet is as much in wonder as his listeners, as to where the perfection came from; writing often in almost as much of a trance, and upon as eager an impulse, as Coleridge, when, in his opium-vision, he walked in the gardens of Hanada.

Great men direct the events of their time; wise men take advantage of them; weak men are borne down by them.